

A wide-angle photograph of a campus scene. In the foreground, a paved path leads through a green lawn. To the right, a large tree is in full bloom with vibrant pink flowers. In the background, a brick building is partially visible through the trees under a clear blue sky.

# The Briar Wire

THE SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE ALUMNAE NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 2 | MAY 2023

## My dear fellow alumnae and friends,

This is a season of renewal and celebration of the many blessings we have as a college and a community. The campus is exploding with color, from the redbuds leading up the stairs to Mary Helen Cochran Library, to the pink dogwood along the path in the east dell toward Guion, to the wildflower meadow that recently underwent a controlled burn, regenerating the pollinator habitat for our apiary and its bees. Sweet Briar has always celebrated our beautiful campus, its historic buildings and the vibrant ecosystem that embraces them.

The academic programs and the transformation of the Women's Leadership Core Curriculum are testaments to the renewal taking place at Sweet Briar and the strength of these core principles. With great excitement, we also see our students breaking records and setting a new course for their academic endeavors. For all of this, we celebrate.

As we celebrate, we are reminded to support each other and encourage our own growth. Our alumnae community has always led the way and inspired and mentored the next generation of alumnae. In this spirit of renewal, the Class of 2023 chose the initiative for their Senior Legacy Project: to raise funds and plant irises and lavender around the cabin for the formerly-enslaved community.

In April, Sweet Work Weeks volunteers came to campus to weed and refresh Daisy's Garden and paint a few areas and this summer, they will return from July 8 through 22 to beautify campus for our students' return.

Through these and other volunteer efforts and with your continued support, our season of renewal will continue for years to come.

With gratitude,

Mary Pope M. Hutson '83  
Senior Vice President for Alumnae Relations and Development

### Important Upcoming Dates

#### Commencement

**Saturday, May 13, 2023, 10 a.m. ET**

Visit [sbc.edu/commencement](https://sbc.edu/commencement) to watch the livestream.

#### Reunion!

**June 2-4, 2023**

Visit [sbc.edu/reunion](https://sbc.edu/reunion) to register.

Registration is open until 11:59 p.m. ET on May 24, 2023.

#### Fiscal Year End

**June 30, 2023**

Visit [sbc.edu/give](https://sbc.edu/give) to make your gift in Sweet Briar's current fiscal year. Checks must be postmarked June 30 or earlier to count in this fiscal year.



## Board of Directors of Sweet Briar College

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Heather Colson Ewing '90,  
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Katie Hawk '21  
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Caroline Chappel Hazarian '09,  
*Associate Director of Alumnae Relations*  
Keeley Sullivan Jurgovan '92,  
*Associate Director of Alumnae Relations*  
Lisa Wray Longino '78, *Senior Director of Major Gifts and Stewardship*  
Rachel Pietsch, *Assistant Director of Alumnae Relations*  
Emily Dodson Sadler '18, *Assistant Director of the Sweet Briar Fund*  
Clélie D. D. Steckel, *Director of Data Analytics and Development Communications*  
Megan Sunwall, *Alumnae Relations and Development Assistant*  
Wanda Vest, *Data Entry Manager*

# NEWS FROM SWEET BRIAR

## Sweet Briar March Days of Giving Goals exceeded for the 8th Year



The bells are ringing once again at Sweet Briar! For our community, the commitment to March Days of Giving has been part of our reaffirmation of Sweet Briar's mission for the last eight years. Whether it was luck or repetition, everyone clearly embraced the call to action—the total amount raised through these 10 days in 2023 is \$1,935,966 from 1,452 gifts.

"I am profoundly grateful to everyone who contributed to Sweet Briar during the March Days of Giving," said President Meredith Woo. "This outpouring of generosity demonstrates the love that the College's family and friends feel for this institution, and the pride they take in supporting Sweet Briar's mission to educate women leaders."

The celebration kicked off on March 1 with the campus community gathering in the Quad to plant a new Sweet Briar rose bush, with students, faculty and staff taking a turn at the shovel.

That evening, alumnae and friends met and exceeded the first \$500,000 goal, raising \$505,074 in less than 24 hours. As in previous years, this unlocked a challenge for March 2-10. This challenge would not have been possible without our challenge donors. This year, our challengers

were ten alumnae: Cornelia Long Matson '58, Hedi Haug White '64, Frances Kirven Morse '68, Blanchette Chappell Maier '73, Muffy Hamilton Parsons '78, Allison Roberts Greene '81, Meg Price Bruno '83, Norma Bulls Valentine '93 and two alumnae who prefer to remain anonymous. These generous alumnae committed a total of \$500,000 to match up to an additional \$500,000 between March 2 and March 10.

This year, alumnae and friends stepped up to March Days of Giving with 1,452 gifts from around the world. Our donors reached across the United States, and many international alumnae even mailed their checks well in advance. Supporters ranged from alumnae to faculty, staff, parents (both current and former), and friends. Among alumnae, we saw a 7 percent increase in our participation rate during March Days of Giving, a metric that is so important and that we track carefully during each year, especially as we strive to reach our 30% goal.

All gifts to the College during March Days of Giving truly make a difference to our current and future students. March Days of Giving continues to show results that magnify the message from alumnae that Sweet Briar will go on in perpetuity.

# NEWS FROM SWEET BRIAR

## Meet Presidential Medalist Sita Moses '23

Sita Moses '23, an art history and studio art double-major from Dublin, New Hampshire, is the recipient of the 2023 Presidential Medal. The medal is given to a senior who has demonstrated exemplary intellectual achievement, in addition to distinction in some or all of these areas: service to the community, contributions to the arts, enlargement of the College's global perspective, athletic fitness and achievement, leadership and contributions to the community discourse.

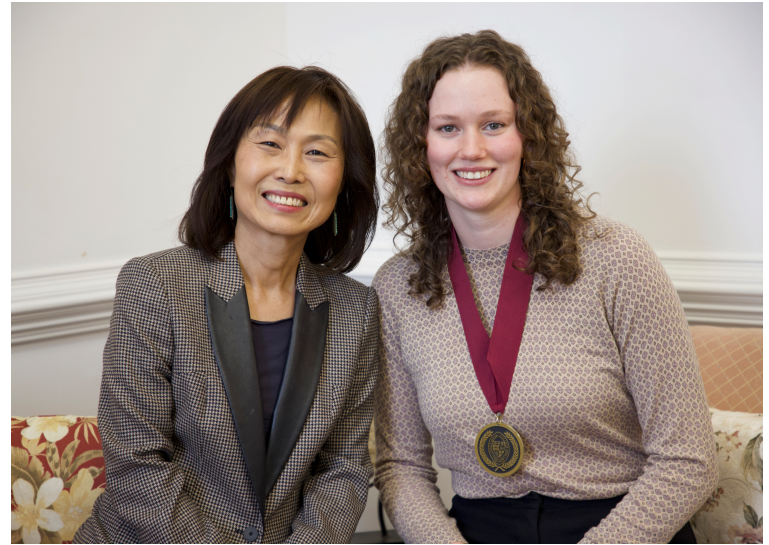
Sita is well-known among her peers, faculty and staff as an accomplished and compassionate student leader. She has been a resident advisor, served as the student representative on the Buildings, Grounds and Technology Committee of the Board of Directors; served as an Outdoor Program leader; is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society; served as the Riding Council President, Vice President, and Treasurer; has been Treasurer of her class, a member of the Sustainability Club, was a committee member on the Multicultural Center Native American and Indigenous Heritage Week and Disability Advocacy and Inclusion Week; and served as President of Chung Mungs.

In addition to being awarded the Presidential Medal, Sita has been awarded a Presidential Scholarship, the Loren Oliver Award in Studio Art, the Nancy Godwin Baldwin '57 Scholarship, the Friends of Art Writing Prize (twice), the Virginia Outdoor Writers Association Essay Contest, the Scholastic Art and Writing Gold Key Award, the Vixen Trophy, the Preston R. Brown Horsemanship Award, and the Daisy Award. She was named to the Interscholastic Horse Show Association (IHSA) All-Academic First Team and the Old Dominion Athletic Conference All-Academic Team. She served as a member of the IHSA Team as well as Team Captain and also served on the American National Riding Commission (ANRC) Novice Team. Sita has also been published in *Red Clay*, Sweet Briar's literary magazine and *Visions*, the Friends of Art newsletter.

"I am so grateful for the leadership positions I have had at Sweet Briar," said Sita. "Taking on leadership roles comes with a degree of trust from your peers. I hope that I have given others an avenue to speak up because I feel that is the job of a leader — to make sure that communication is happening at all levels."

Sita was very surprised to receive the Presidential Medal and feels honored by this recognition. "It was a really lovely recognition for everything that has happened in the last four years, and it feels like there's no way it has been four years!"

Before she came to Sweet Briar, Sita had primarily



focused her art in oil painting. When she visited Sweet Briar as a prospective student, she attended a handmade paper making workshop taught by Professor Laura Pharis. The process takes a while to complete since the paper has to dry out completely, so when it was ready, Professor Pharis mailed Sita's paper to her in New Hampshire with a letter. "That really made me want to come to Sweet Briar!" said Sita. Since then, Sita has learned and developed her skills in ceramics and printmaking.

After graduation, Sita will return to New Hampshire. In June, her parents are teaching a retreat in the mountains of Spain and she'll join her brother there to help cook for the members of the retreat. After that, she plans to travel and take on seasonal and part-time work, whether at national parks or summer horse camps, something she's been doing since she was in high school. She's also interested in continuing to make art, "even in small ways," and is considering applying to some artist residencies to fully immerse herself in her art at some point in the future. "I've found a lot of stability at Sweet Briar, and it's time to adventure!"

Adventure on, Sita! Sweet Briar will always be cheering for you.

## GIVING TO SWEET BRIAR

### Anonymous donor pledges \$1.2 million to support Anne Gary Pannell Center



This spring, Sweet Briar received an anonymous commitment for \$1.25 million to support Anne Gary Pannell Center, home to the College's art collection and primary gallery space.

This building, one of 22 at Sweet Briar on the National Register of Historic Places, was originally constructed in 1906 as the Refectory for students. In 1984, Sweet Briar renovated the building, moving dining services to the newly-built Prothro Dining Hall, and renamed it Anne Gary Pannell Center.

In addition to housing Sweet Briar's art collection, Pannell serves as the primary instruction location for art history and arts management certificate courses. The large gallery space reached through the central doors has exhibited artists from around the world and has even functioned as a performance space for dance concerts in recent history.

However, other current uses are vastly different from what was originally imagined for the renovation of Pannell. For example, gallery staff have recently reallocated space used as the former slide room. In 1984, using images of slides of famous works of art

was the primary method used to instruct courses in art history. Now, such resources are available online through museums and databases all over the globe, negating the utility of housing thousands of slides in Pannell.

Longtime readers of *The Briar Wire* may recall the Summer 2016 issue, which became an issue of *Visions*, the newsletter developed by the Friends of Art. In that issue, the Friends of Art Board addressed needs for a refresh to the main entrance, replacing the lighting and window coverings, and the need to replace the HVAC system. While these cosmetic updates have been addressed, Sweet Briar still needs to replace the HVAC system and make other updates to ensure that this space can fulfill its full potential for students and visitors alike.

While this generous alumna donor to Pannell wishes to remain anonymous, she hopes that her gift will inspire other alumnae to support Sweet Briar's greatest needs, allowing our alma mater to support women's education for generations to come.

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



July 8-22, 2023

Come back to Sweet Briar this summer for our annual Sweet Work Weeks, when alumnae and friends volunteer to care for the College's buildings and grounds. Sweet Work Weeks projects include:

- painting, indoors and outdoors (including dorms!)
- weeding
- trimming shrubs
- planting
- pressure washing
- cleaning outdoor furniture
- trail maintenance
- and much more!



When you come to volunteer for Sweet Work Weeks, Sweet Briar provides you with housing and meals during your stay. You'll work alongside alumnae and friends during the day, and in the evenings, you'll have time to get to know each other and learn what brought you back to Sweet Briar as a volunteer!

If you have any questions about accommodations for Sweet Work Weeks, please contact Rachel Pietsch, Assistant Director of Alumnae Relations, at [rpietsch@sbc.edu](mailto:rpietsch@sbc.edu) or 434-381-6163.

Register now at [alumnae.sbc.edu/sweet-work-weeks/](https://alumnae.sbc.edu/sweet-work-weeks/)

## Thank you to our Sweet Work Weekend volunteers!

Several alumnae and friends returned the weekend of April 15-16 to weed and refresh Daisy's garden, paint the Vixen Den and House 3, and reconnect with each other and Sweet Briar.



# ALUMNAE GIVING AND PARTICIPATION

Class Year	Giving Apr. 24, 2023	Participation Apr. 24, 2023
1940	\$0	0%
1941	\$0	0%
1942	\$2,281	14.3%
1943	\$0	0.0%
1944	\$276,450	36.4%
1945	\$3,000	11.1%
1946	\$17,479	8.3%
1947	\$25	5.6%
1948	\$2,100	13.3%
1949	\$60,675	33.3%
1950	\$31,858	26.7%
1951	\$105,900	22.9%
1952	\$18,708	30.9%
1953	\$292,513	28.1%
1954	\$38,925	35.2%
1955	\$19,704	34.5%
1956	\$18,065	22.9%
1957	\$140,010	32.6%
1958	\$495,456	27.9%
1959	\$438,367	29.2%
1960	\$814,147	32.1%

Class Year	Giving Apr. 24, 2023	Participation Apr. 24, 2023
1961	\$138,150	30.0%
1962	\$328,382	31.1%
1963	\$748,114	35.6%
1964	\$127,581	32.1%
1965	\$99,446	35.8%
1966	\$207,516	27.5%
1967	\$93,050	28.7%
1968	\$138,822	55.4%
1969	\$34,850	17.2%
1970	\$69,580	27.3%
1971	\$318,674	29.2%
1972	\$637,982	21.5%
1973	\$275,081	35.5%
1974	\$166,735	18.0%
1975	\$126,091	27.1%
1976	\$137,419	13.9%
1977	\$24,754	22.4%
1978	\$307,284	35.0%
1979	\$124,743	13.9%
1980	\$30,700	17.7%
1981	\$404,245	16.1%

## Reunion Giving and Participation Awards for Classes ending in 3 and 8

### The Nancy Dowd Burton '46 Award

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year with the highest total unrestricted giving to Sweet Briar in the current fiscal year.

### The Centennial Award

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year with the highest total giving to all funds to Sweet Briar over the last five years since their last anniversary Reunion year.

### Participation Award: 25<sup>th</sup> through 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Classes

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year between their 25th and 50th years with the highest participation in giving to Sweet Briar.

### Participation Award: 5<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> Reunion Classes

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year between their 5th and 20th years with the highest participation in giving to Sweet Briar.

# ALUMNAE GIVING AND PARTICIPATION

Class Year	Giving Apr. 24, 2023	Participation Apr. 24, 2023
1982	\$371,198	13.5%
1983	\$92,475	24.3%
1984	\$51,690	22.7%
1985	\$49,355	15.7%
1986	\$44,792	30.5%
1987	\$5,502	5.9%
1988	\$21,860	15.2%
1989	\$14,426	10.5%
1990	\$18,522	14.5%
1991	\$3,950	13.7%
1992	\$18,130	18.2%
1993	\$16,841	15.1%
1994	\$3,104	13.6%
1995	\$28,846	22.2%
1996	\$11,199	13.5%
1997	\$11,002	18.8%
1998	\$31,464	17.9%
1999	\$16,405	11.2%
2000	\$4,019	10.8%
2001	\$6,210	10.4%
2002	\$7,134	15.2%

Class Year	Giving Apr. 24, 2023	Participation Apr. 24, 2023
2003	\$19,756	12.6%
2004	\$2,143	9.8%
2005	\$1,355	4.3%
2006	\$9,745	12.4%
2007	\$2,341	8.0%
2008	\$4,069	14.1%
2009	\$1,580	5.4%
2010	\$3,246	7.8%
2011	\$4,345	7.2%
2012	\$5,633	9.0%
2013	\$512	3.6%
2014	\$1,341	3.9%
2015	\$2,825	10.9%
2016	\$645	5.0%
2017	\$81	1.0%
2018	\$679	6.0%
2019	\$135	6.7%
2020	\$485	5.3%
2021	\$92	5.2%

## Awards, continued

### The Nancy Godwin Baldwin '57 Award

Given to the class celebrating an anniversary Reunion year with the highest percentage of its members attending Reunion.

### Visionary Class Award

Given to any class that contributes \$1 million or more to any funds at Sweet Briar within one fiscal year.

## Current Participation Rates

**Internal Participation Rate: 17.4%**  
(degreed and non-degreed alumnae, which is also the rate used in charts above)

**External Participation Rate: 23.3%**  
(degreed alumnae only)

**We have a goal to reach 30% participation in both our internal and external rates!**

*All data on this page reported on Apr. 24, 2023.*

**Make your gift to the Sweet  
Briar Fund today at  
[sbc.edu/give](https://sbc.edu/give)!**

## LIFELONG LEARNING

### Introducing Sweet Briar Summer

June 22-25, 2023

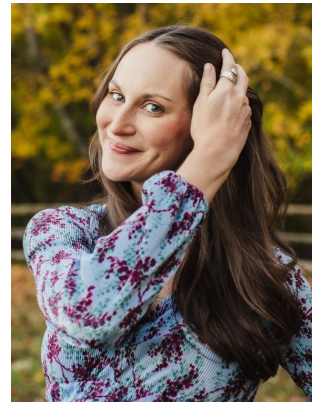
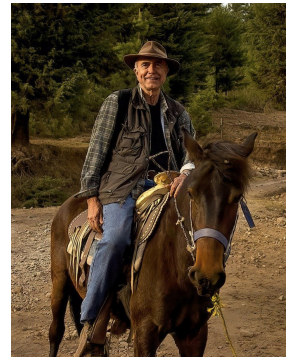
This summer, the College will launch Sweet Briar Summer, a four-day arts and writing retreat on campus featuring workshops, performance, activities, and social gatherings. Sweet Briar faculty and visiting artists lead master classes during the day, while guest performers and writers will offer evening events. Sweet Briar Summer is open to men and women ages 18 and over.

There will be 6 different workshop tracks:

- **The Land as Art**, taught by Tracy Chapman Hamilton, Associate Professor of Art History
- **Smartphone Photography**, taught by Medford Taylor, Adjunct Instructor of Studio Art
- **So the Story Begins: Using Prompts to Find Your Way Forward**, taught by John Gregory Brown, Julia Jackson Nichols Professor of English and Creative Writing
- **Writing Your Life Story**, taught by Erica Trabold, Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing
- **Yoga and Modern Dance**, taught by Colette Krogol and Matt Reeves, Directors of Orange Grove Dance Company
- **Telling Stories with Sound**, taught by Josh Harris, Associate Professor of Music

Alumnae are eligible for a discount, which was emailed to all alumnae on April 20, 2023. If you did not receive the email, please call 434-381-6131 to receive the discount code. Please note that space is limited for each workshop.

To learn more or register, please visit  
[sbc.edu/arts/sweet-briar-summer-arts-and-writing-retreat](https://sbc.edu/arts/sweet-briar-summer-arts-and-writing-retreat).



Workshop instructors, left to right, top to bottom:  
Chapman-Hamilton, Taylor, Brown, Trabold, Krogol and  
Reeves, Harris